



ASCD 2016 | Educator Leadership and Support

Teachers and school leaders are the two most important in-school factors affecting student achievement, and these educators deserve the recognition and resources necessary to maximize student learning and prepare our young people for the future. Policymakers must ensure that each student has access to effective educators and that each educator has access to supports and training across the career continuum.

Educator development needs to reflect an ongoing and comprehensive approach to preparation, support, and continuous improvement. This development should embody the principle of lifelong learning and recognize the variety of roles that educators play throughout their careers. Appropriate incentives can ensure the recruitment and retention of high-achieving students into the profession. Beginning teachers benefit from periods of induction, with multiple opportunities for feedback and mentoring by experienced professionals. And veteran educators benefit from personalized, ongoing, job-embedded, collaborative development opportunities. This multitiered approach requires sustained investments in time and resources to support educators along the entire career continuum, so that all students have access to effective educators in all classes.

Flexibility in routes to licensure is essential to meet today's demand for effective educators, particularly in high-need schools. This flexibility, however, must not sacrifice the rigorous professional standards to which educators expect to be held. States should work in a coordinated fashion to provide reciprocity to licensed educators and help facilitate the free movement of educators to fill positions.

Institutions of higher education should collaborate with local districts regarding educator preparation programs. To best prepare new educators to meet the unique needs of local districts and schools, institutions of higher education should be encouraged to seek input from school districts to help inform their teacher preparation programs. District and school leaders should regularly communicate with teacher preparation program administrators to share data, school culture and climate survey results, demographic changes, and any other information that can help to address the needs of each school district and best place the teachers and school leaders that graduate from these programs.